

## Message Text

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ACTION AGR-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 HEW-02 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1454

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: EAGR ETRD JA

SUBJECT: CITRUS/FUNGICIDES

REF: TOKYO 7830

DEPT PAS AGRICULTURE FOR HUME AND FITZSIMMONDS

1. SUMMARY : RATE OF REJECTION BY MHW DIE TO PRESENCE OF  
ILLEGAL FUNGICIDES DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY. RATE OF DECAY UP  
SHARPLY. NEWS MEDIA PUBLICIZING DUMPING OF REJECTED FRUIT.  
LEMON PRICES STABLE. NORMAL GOJ TRANSFERS/PROMOTIONS COME  
TO DIR. GEN. ISHIMARU AND DIR. MIURA OF MHW.

2. AS UP DATE TO REFTEL, FLOWING DATA RECEIVED FROM MHW,  
GIVING SITUATION AS OF UNE 19:

LEMONS: 779,468 CARTONS INSPECTED  
217,580 CARTONS REJECTED FOR 28 PERCENT

REJECT RATE.

GRAPEFRUIT: 3,660,507 CARTONS INSEPECTED  
48,130 CARTONS REJECTED FOR 1.3 PERCENT  
REJECT RATE.

ORANGES: 191,086 CARTONS INSPECTED,  
17,750 CARTONS REJECTONS FOR 9 PERCENT  
REJECT RATE.

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TOTAL U.S. CITRUS DENIED CUSTOM CLEARANCE MY MHW APRIL 5

THRU JUNE 19, 283,460 CARTONS. THS TOTAL DOES NOT INCUDE  
14,519 CARTONS ORDER RESHIPED OR DESTROYED WHICH HAD  
CLEARED CUSTOMS BUT WERE IN WAREHOUSES AT TIME MHW BEGAN  
OVERA-ALL TESTING PROGRAM ON APRIL 5 (SEE TOKYO 7293, PARA 2).

3. MHW DATA SUCH AS GIVEN ABOVE NOT BEING KEPT AS CURRENT AS  
IN PAST DUE APPARENTLY TO DECLINE IN PRESSURE ON FOOD CHEMISTRY  
DIV. FROM VARIOUS INTERESTED PARTIES AND PLENTY OF WORK IN

OTHER AREAS FOR MHW PERSONNEL INVOLVED. ALSO AMOUNT OF FRUIT  
CURRENTLY BEING REJECTED BY MHW IS RELATIVELY LOW RESULTING  
IN LESS PRIORITY BEING PLACED ON COMPILING OF THESE DATA.

4. MAJOR PROBLEM NOW IS DECAY IN FRUIT, NOT REJECTION AT  
PORT OF MHW, MAF/PQ OFFICIALS SAY RATE OF DECAY HAS QTE  
INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY UNQTE. THEY HAVE AGREED TO SUPPLY  
AGATT OFFICE ACTUAL DATA RE DECAY RATE IN EARLY AUGUST.

5. IN ACCORDANCE WITH ESTABLISHED MAF/PQ INSPECTION PROCEDURES,  
IF A GIVEN SHIPMENT CONTAINS HIGH PERCENTAGE DECAYED FRUIT IT  
WILL NOT PASS PRELIMINARY PQ INSEPTION. THE INSPECTOR ORDERS  
IMPORTERS TO GO THROUGH SHIPMENT AND SELECT OUT ALL DECAYED  
FRUIT BEFOE FINAL PQ INSPECTION CAN BEGIN. ACCORDING TO  
RELIABLE TRADE SOURCES, OF 45,398 CATONS INSEPTEDFROM SK 28  
(IRIS QUEEN ARRIVING HARUMI JUNE 27), ONLY 13,776CARTONS  
PASSED FIRST PQ INSPECTION.REMIAING 31,622 CARTONS MUST  
HAVE DECAYED FRUIT SORETED OUT BEFORE MAF/PQ WILL MAKE ANOTHER  
INSPECTION. DECAY IS HAPPEING SO RAPIDLY THAT TRADE SOURCES  
SAY THAT BY THE TM THEY GO THROUGH SHIPMENT SELECTING OUT  
BAD FRUIT ONCE THERE IS WHOLE NEW SET OF SPOILED FRUIT IN THE  
QTE GOOD UNQTE FRUIT. HENCE, AS MUCH AS 80 PERCENT OF THE  
31,622 CARTONS REJECTED ON FIRST PQ INSPECTON OF SK 28 MAY  
END UP AS DECAYED FRUIT DESTINED TO DUMP.

6. SAME SITUATION REPORTEDLY EXISTS WITH FRUIT ON SK 29 (SNOW  
CRYSTAL ARRIVING JUNE 27). OF 60,312 CARTONS INSPECTED,  
ONLY 7,890 CARTONS PASSED FIRST INSPECTION. OF 52,422  
CARTONS LEFT, ROUGHLY 70 TO 80 PERCENT IS OR WILL HAVE BEEN  
SLECTED OUT AS DECAYED BEFORE SECOND PQ INSPECTION.

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7. CONGESTION AT PORTS HASBEEN ALLEVIATED CONSIDERABLE IN  
LAST SEVERAL WEEKS. MHW TEST RESULTS CAN NOW BE OBTAINED  
IN 3 TO 4 DAYS AND CUSTOMS CLEARANCE IN 7 DAYS AFTER UNLOADING  
IF IT PASSES PQ INSPECTION FIRST TIME. PREVIOUSLY IT WAS  
TAKING 14 TO 20 DAYS TO CLEAR CUSTOMS AFTER UNLOADING. BUT  
EVEN 7 DAYS IS TOO LONG WITHOUT FUNGICIDES. TRADE SOURCES  
SAY FRUIT PUT WITHIN 7 DAYS DECAY HAS INCREASED TO ABOUT 40  
PERCENT OVERALL AVERAGE, COMPARED WITH MORMAL AVERAGE OF

10 TO 15 PERCENT DURING SUMMER SEASON.

8. SOME EXPERTS SAY THIS SITUATION WILL GET WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER. ACCORDING TO TRADE RUMORS SUNKIST IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING SUSPENSION OF FURTHER SHIPMENTS UNTIL NEXT SEASON'S FRUIT IS AVAILABLE BECAUSE CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FRUIT IS TOO MATURE TO STAND SHIPMENT WITHOUT FUNGICIDES.

9. JAPANESE MEDIA OVER PAST 10 DAYS HAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE TO FACT THAT MHW-REJECTED LEMONS ARE BEING DISPOSED OF AT SEA, ETC. MHW OFFICIAL TERAMATSU SUGGESTED IN RECENT MTG. WITH AGATT REPS THAT THIS PUBLICITY WOULD HOPEFULLY HAVE EFFECT ON MAKING GENERAL PUBLIC FEEL IT A PITY THAT SO MUCH GOOD FRUIT IS BEING DESTROYED.

10. LEMON PRICES ARE QUITE STABLE NOW AT ABOUT 50 YEN PER FRUIT, QUALITY IS POOR DUE TO DECAY. PRICES SHOULD BEGIN TO INCREASE SOON, ESPECIALLY IF SUNKIST ANNOUNCES INTENTIONS TO STOP SHIPMENTS FOR A WHILE.

11. ISHIMARU, DIR, GEN., ESPECIALLY SANITATION BUREAU, MHW, AND MIURA, DIR., FOOD SANITATION DIVISION, MHW, HAVE BOTH BEEN TRANSFERRED IN RECENT GOJ OFFICE SHUFFLE. EFFECT OF THIS CHANGE ON U.S. INTERESTS RE THIS FUNGICIDE PROBLEM CANNOT BE DETERMINED AT THIS EARLY DATE. BOTH ISHIMARU AND MIURA APPEARED ANXIOUS AND WILLING TO WORK TOWARD AN EARLY SOLUTION. WHETHER THEIR REPLACEMENTS HAVE SIMILAR ATTITUDES REMAINS TO BE SEEN. AT THIS POINT TERAMATSU, ASST, DIR. FOOD SANITATION DIV. AND IYAZAWA, DIR. FOOD CHEMISTRY DIV. APPEAR TO BE REMAINING.  
HODGSON

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